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None

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(54) Apparatus for playing a game

(57) An apparatus for playing a game comprises a board marked with spaces, number determining means, instruction card means, and one or more independent pieces movable along respective predetermined paths on the board on command of a selected one of the instruction card means. Each player has: a non-moving base indicator (12); a plurality of blocking pieces positionable on the board at the discretion of the player (11), and a plurality of first (1-8) and second (9, 10) playing pieces each adapted to be moved a number of spaces on the board determined by said number determining means or to be able to cause an opposing piece to be removed from the board when that piece is spaced by a distance not more than a number of spaces on the board determined by said number determining means. The distances, whether for moving or removal of opposing pieces, of said first (1-8) and second (9, 10) pieces are determined for each case by a different number of or a different number of operations by said number determining means. The game may represent a battle in space in which case the independent piece may be orbiting moons.

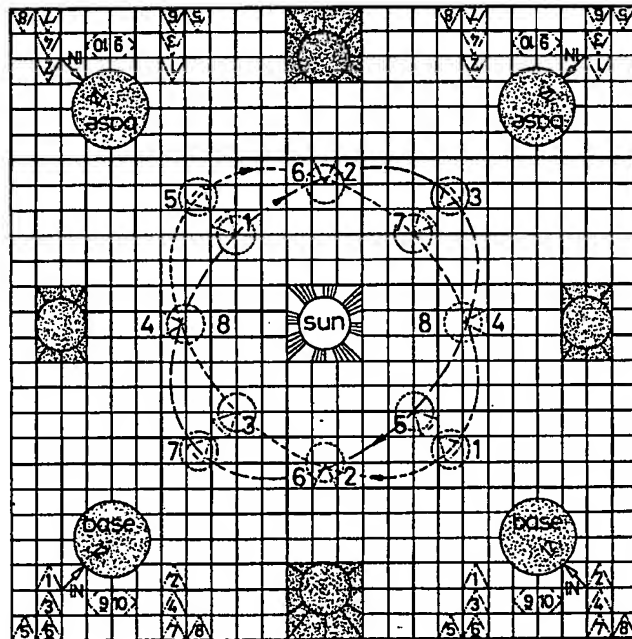


Fig. 1.

The drawings originally filed were informal and the print here reproduced is taken from a later filed formal copy.
The claims were filed later than the filing date within the period prescribed by Rule 25(1) of the Patents Rules 1982.

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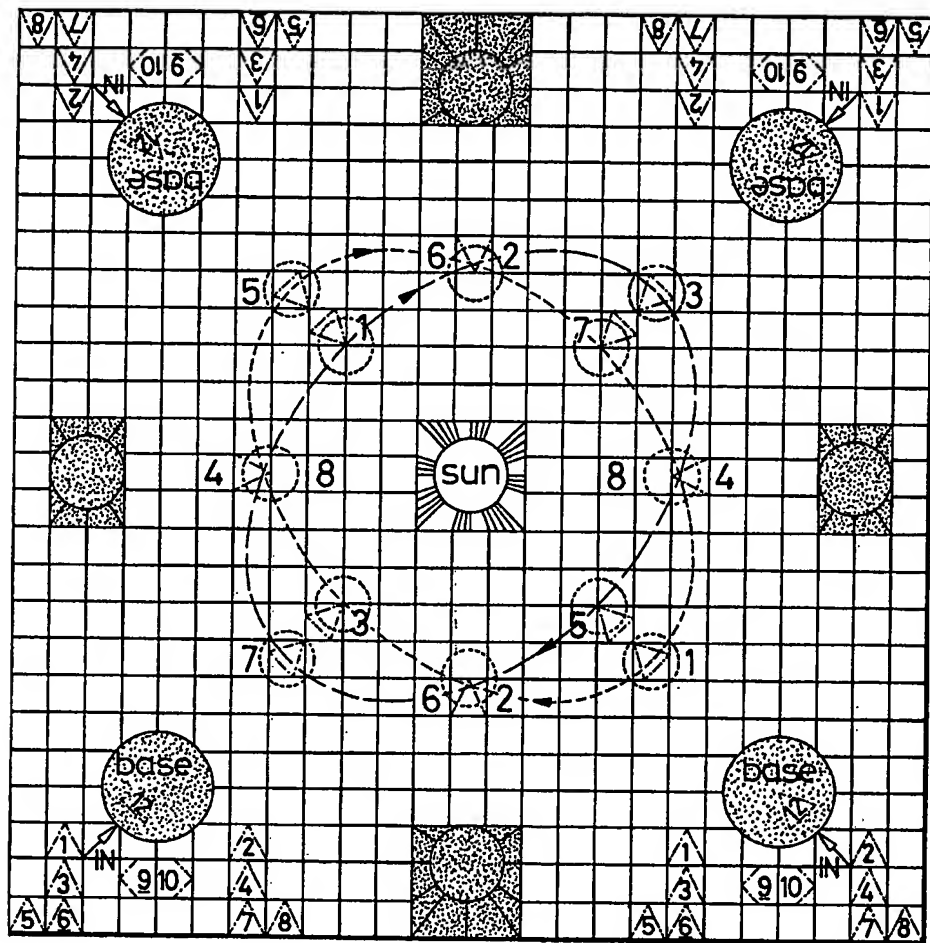


Fig. 1.

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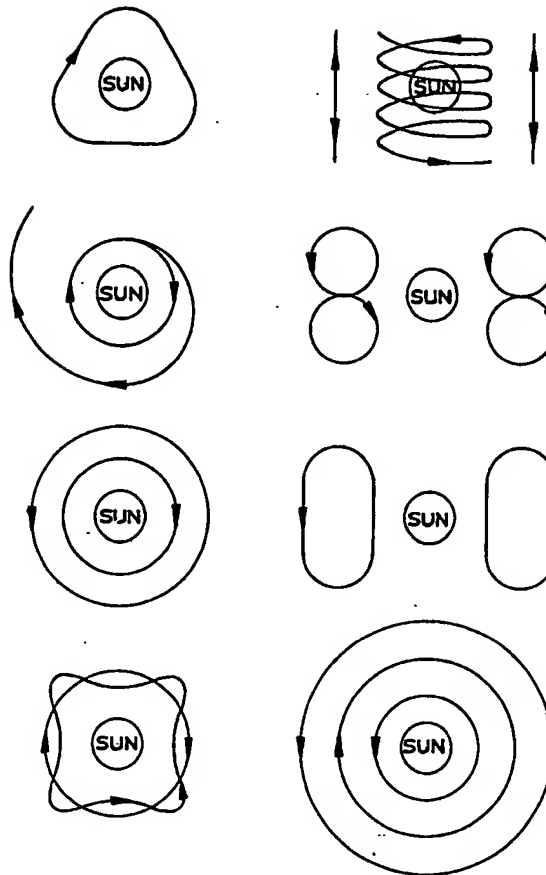


FIG. 2

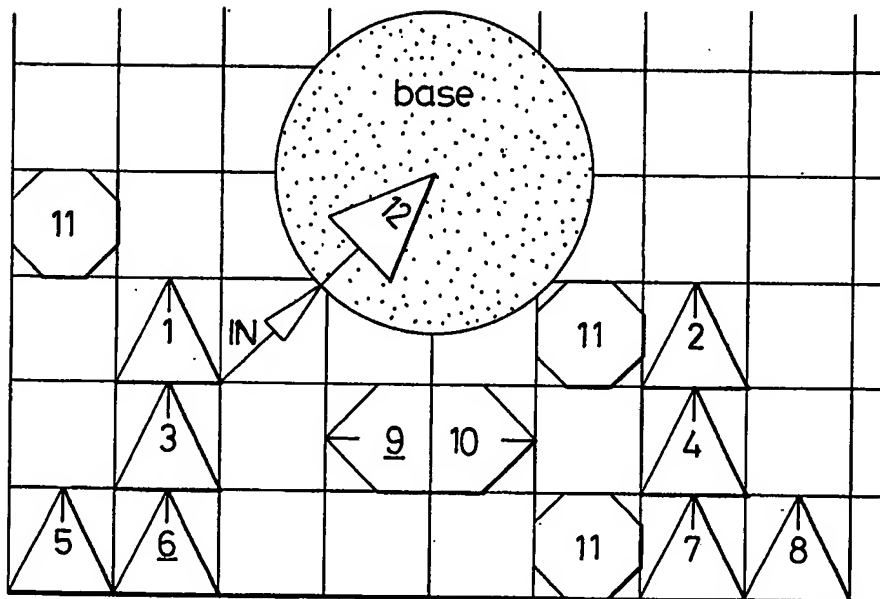


FIG. 3

SPECIFICATION

Apparatus for playing a game

5 The present invention relates to an apparatus for playing a game. More particularly, but not exclusively, the invention relates to a board game apparatus in which the board and playing pieces represent space ships and the
10 space in which they may compete.

It is an object of the present invention to provide a game apparatus to enable a game to be played which is dependent upon both strategy and luck. It is intended that the game
15 may be played at several levels from a junior more simple version to a highly skilled level.

According to the present invention, there is provided an apparatus for playing a game comprising a board marked with spaces, number determining means, instruction card
20 means, one or more independent pieces movable along respective predetermined paths on the board on command of a selected one of the instruction card means, and for each player: a non-moving base indicator; a plurality of
25 blocking pieces positionable on the board at the discretion of the player; and a plurality of first and second playing pieces each adapted to be moved a number of spaces on the
30 board determined by said number determining means or to be able to cause an opposing piece to be removed from the board when that piece is spaced by a distance not more than a number of spaces on the board deter-
35 mined by said number determining means, the distances, whether for moving or removal of opposing pieces, of said first and second playing pieces being determined for each case by a different number of or a different number
40 of operations by said number determining means.

Preferably two number determining means are used in either moving or causing removal of opposing pieces by said first playing
45 pieces, and one number determining means is used in moving and three number determining means in causing removal of opposing pieces by said second playing pieces. As an exception only one number determining means may
50 be used by either said first or second playing pieces when causing removal of said non-moving base indicator.

Preferably said blocking pieces are adapted to be non-moving after being positioned.

55 Advantageously said blocking pieces can only be caused to be removed by action of said second playing pieces.

An embodiment of the present invention will now be more particularly described by way of
60 example and with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:

FIGURE 1 shows a board for playing the game;

65 FIGURE 2 shows eight examples of alternative paths for the independent playing pieces;

and

FIGURE 3 shows to a larger scale a portion of the board allocated as a base area for one player.

70 As can be seen from Figure 1, there are four base areas indicating that up to four players may play the game. Marked on the board in each base area are mandatory starting positions for the various playing pieces. The board
75 is marked with a number of hazards, for example, "black holes" at a median position on each side and a sun centrally of the board. Around the sun are marked orbit lines for two moons. In the embodiment shown in Figure 1,
80 these are interlocking ellipses. Other possible orbit markings are shown in Figure 2.

Two sets of cards are provided which will be described in more detail below.

At the commencement of the game, each
85 player is issued with a number of playing pieces of various types. Each playing piece of the various types have a distinctive shape and in the case of those which may "fire" to cause removal of an opposing piece from the
90 board is marked with some indication of the direction in which the fire is to travel. Each piece is also marked with a value for use in computing the winner of the game. The pieces allocated to each player are as follows:
95 eight starfighters, numbered 1-8 in Figure 3; two battlestars, numbered 9 and 10 in Figure 3; three asteroids, each numbered 11; and a battle flag, numbered 12. They are placed in the positions indicated in Figure 3 with the
100 exception of the asteroids which may be placed at the discretion of the player.

Two "moon" pieces are provided each of which is placed at the position marked 1 of its respective orbit around the sun. They may
105 be moved under the instructions of doubles cards as described below. There are also provided collision cards the purpose of which will be described and at least three dice.

To play the game, each player in turn may
110 throw a selected number of the dice. For moving a starfighter piece, two dice are thrown while for moving a battle star piece, one dice is thrown. In either case, the number indicated by the throw may be sub-divided so
115 that two or more similar playing pieces may be moved a total indicated by the dice. The piece must move in the direction in which it is pointing, although a turn, counting as a single number of the dice throw may be made at the
120 beginning and/or the end of the move for any piece.

As an alternative to moving a piece, it may "fire" at an opposing piece in the direction indicated by the marking. In such a case, the
125 range of the "shot" is also determined by the dice, the starfighters being accorded the benefit of a throw by two dice while the battle stars are accorded the benefit of a throw by three dice. If the number of spaces, in a
130 straight line, separating the attacking playing

piece from the opposing playing piece is less than or equal to the number shown by the dice throw, the opposing playing piece is deemed destroyed and may be removed from the board. The player operating the attacking piece may then accumulate the number of points shown by the number on the destroyed playing piece.

- 5 The asteroid playing pieces may only be destroyed by a battle star playing piece. The battle star playing pieces are not removed from the board when they are first hit, nor after the second hit, but a third hit will cause them to be removed. Means may be provided to note the various hits against each battle star.

During movement, playing pieces may not move through black holes, space bases, moons, asteroids, the sun and other spacecraft. Similarly firing lines must be clear of obstructions.

- 10 In the case of starfighter pieces, if a double is thrown on the dice, either in moving or firing, the move is not taken and instead a double card is chosen. The instructions given on the card must be followed. The instructions order one of the players' starfighter pieces to a point on one of the moon orbits and also order one of the moons to be moved to its next position. If these two movements result in a collision between the moon and that or any other playing piece, a collision card must be taken. These give further instructions as to the disposal or recovery or otherwise of the playing piece involved in the collision.

- 15 The end of the game may be decided at a fixed time in which case each player counts up the number of points of those opposing playing pieces which it has captured. The winner is the player holding the largest number of points. Alternatively, the game may be played to a finish in which case one player fires on and captures the flagpiece of the last remaining player, the other players having been eliminated by either one or other of the two remaining or one subsequently eliminated in a similar manner.

- 20 There are other alternative endings, which should be decided by the players prior to commencement of the game. One is that the game shall end as soon as one player fires on and captures any other player's flagpiece. Another is that the game shall have a randomly determined ending, for example the game ends if the two moon pieces "collide" at an intersecting point of their orbits.

The playing pieces may be made of plastics material, preferably in the shape shown in the drawings and coloured differently for each player.

CLAIMS

1. An apparatus for playing a game comprising a board marked with spaces, number

determining means, instruction card means, one or more independent pieces movable along respective predetermined paths on the board on command of a selected one of the instruction card means, and for each player: a non-moving base indicator; a plurality of blocking pieces positionable on the board at the discretion of the player, and a plurality of first and second playing pieces each adapted to be moved a number of spaces on the board determined by said number determining means or to be able to cause an opposing piece to be removed from the board when that piece is spaced by a distance not more than a number of spaces on the board determined by said number determining means, the distances, whether for moving or removal of opposing pieces, of said first and second playing pieces being determined for each case by a different number of or a different number of operations by said number determining means.

2. An apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein two number determining means are used in either moving or causing removal of opposing pieces by said first playing pieces.

3. An apparatus as claimed in either claim 1 or claim 2, wherein one number determining means is used in moving and three number determining means in causing removal of opposing pieces by said second playing pieces.

4. An apparatus as claimed in claim 1, wherein only one number determining means is used by either said first or second playing pieces when causing removal of said non-moving base indicator.

5. An apparatus as claimed in any one of the preceding claims, wherein said blocking pieces are adapted to be non-moving after being positioned.

6. An apparatus as claimed in any one of the preceding claims, wherein said blocking pieces can only be caused to be removed by action of said second playing pieces.

7. An apparatus for playing a game substantially as described herein with reference to the accompanying drawings.

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